GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3351
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2005
DONATION OF EYES
Singh Shri Chandrabhan Bhaiya

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the government is aware that one lakh eyes are needed per year as per an estimate of WHO;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken by the Government for creating awareness amongst public and encouraging them to donate eyes;

(d) whether at present 1.25 crore people are blind in the country;

(e) if so, whether in the opinion of Eye Specialists blindless can be treated in 80% of the cases;

(f) whether in 60 percent of said cases cataract is the main cause of blindness;

(g) if so, the percentage of persons who regained vision after treatment;

(h) whether the number of eye patients has increased in the recent years; and

(i) if so, the main reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (b) Donated eyes are required for treatment of corneal blindness. To clear the backlog of corneal opacity and treatment of new cases, one lakh donated eyes are required every year. Presently, about 25000 eyes are collected which are transplanted on bilateral corneally blind persons.

(c) Following steps have been taken to create awareness among the public and to encourage them to donate eyes:

- Organizing Observance of National Fortnight on Eye Donation from 25th August- 8th September every year.
- Enhance mass awareness through messages on television, radio, press and printed materials.
- Training hospital staff on grief counseling for motivating relatives of terminally ill patients for eye donation.
- Provide financial assistance to eye banks in Government and voluntary sectors.

(d) It is estimated that there are about 1.21 crores blind persons in the country.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) Yes, Sir.

(g) The success rate following cataract surgery is over 90% in the country.

(h) There is no evidence to suggest increase in eye patients.

(i) Question does not arise.